



Review

Author(s): August B. Hollingshead

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Source: *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (Feb., 1961), pp. 155-156

Published by: [American Sociological Association](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2090562>

Accessed: 30-11-2015 16:02 UTC

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of major issues in American life. As with other such programs developed by FAE, *Aging in the Modern World* was widely distributed and was used in various settings with both lay and professional groups. So far as this reviewer knows, no formal evaluation was ever made of the effectiveness of these materials; but there were various informal reports received by the Editors that the material had proved effective in helping middle-aged persons face the problems of growing old.

Now that the FAE has concluded its activities in the preparation and try-out of such programs, *Aging in the Modern World* was turned over to a commercial publisher, Prentice-Hall.

The present edition is still directed toward the middle-aged person but is designed for individual reading rather than group discussion. It consists of ten essays, written in popular style by nine different authors, most of whom are well known in the field of gerontology, and of a collection of accompanying readings. The topics vary from health to creativity to pre-retirement education; and the readings range from an essay by Cicero to modern poetry to popular scientific articles. The readings have been increased in number and placed with the essays they amplify. There is also a new section on retirement, edited by John Walker Powell.

The book will probably take its place in the trade (not the textbook) market as one of the better efforts in the field of aging that is directed at the "consumer," the aging person himself. It is an interesting collection of materials, many of them provocative, and many of them of high literary quality. The book should have considerable appeal to the relatively well-educated adult who is beginning to look ahead to old age.

BERNICE L. NEUGARTEN

University of Chicago

Americans View Their Mental Health: A Nationwide Interview Survey. By GERALD GURIN, JOSEPH VEROFF, and SHEILA FELD. Joint Commission on Mental Illness and Health. Monograph Series No. 4. New York: Basic Books, 1960. xxxv, 444 pp. \$7.50.

The Etiology of Schizophrenia. Edited by DON D. JACKSON. New York: Basic Books, 1960. 456 pp. \$7.50.

Americans View Their Mental Health is the fourth volume in a series of ten monographs planned, sponsored, and being published by the Joint Commission on Mental Illness and Health in accordance with the provisions of the Mental Health Study Act of 1955. These monographs

are designed to provide an over-all picture of the problems posed by mental health and illness in the population of the United States. As such, they may serve as a base line for future local, state, and national programs in the mental health field.

Americans View Their Mental Health addresses itself to the question, "How mentally healthy do adult Americans think they are?" The answers to this, and many related queries, was sought by interviewing a probability sample of Americans in a typical one-shot survey. The survey was carried out by the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center. The co-authors of this volume headed the study group. The sample was designed to be representative of the total adult population by age group, sex, education, income, occupation, and place of residence. Persons above 21 years of age living away from home were not included in the sample. Some 92 per cent of the sample was interviewed by staff members of the Survey Research Center. The 8 per cent of refusals is not high for a field study. However, as in all such studies, this would be an interesting segment of the population to reach. A total of 2460 interviews were completed. The interviews lasted from one to four hours; the average was two hours. The survey questions were divided into two broad groups: (1) How does the respondent feel he has adjusted to the problems he faces in daily life? (2) How does he cope with these problems? The specific questions on the interview schedule were designed to elicit the respondent's psychological and social problems as he saw them, his attitudes toward them, and what he thought he ought to do about them, as well as what he said he had done.

The researchers cross-tabulated the respondent's answers with age, sex, education, income, occupation, residential area, and so on. The cross-tabulations bring into focus a series of interesting detailed findings on the emotional problems of adult Americans. For example, money, mainly a lack of it, is a primary reason for "unhappiness" among almost one-third of the respondents; but some three out of five "worry" about money. The largest concentration of unhappiness and worry is found in families with incomes between \$3,000 and \$6,000 per year. Their unhappiness and worry over financial matters may be related to the discrepancy between their achievements and their aspirations.

The subjective nature of mental health and illness contribute to the research problem for workers interested in this area of human behavior. Thus, the survey's findings on the mental health of the respondents is relative to the

criterion the researchers used in their analysis of the data. The authors are aware of this issue, and they caution against it on numerous occasions. In sum, this volume tells us how a representative sample of adult Americans feel about their mental health problem, how they adjust to it, and what they did to cope with the problem when it became too severe for the individual and his associates to handle without outside aid.

This book is the repository for a complex accumulation of survey data. It should be in every journeyman sociologist's library who is interested in mental health and illness.

The second book under review, namely, *The Etiology of Schizophrenia*, edited by Don D. Jackson, is a compilation of papers on the assumed causes of schizophrenia by seventeen authors. Jackson introduces the volume with a

critical essay on the development of etiological theories pertinent to schizophrenia. The remaining parts of the book are focused on the genetics, biochemistry, physiology, psychology, and psychodynamics of schizophrenia. The authors of the essays are distinguished investigators in their particular areas of competence. Jackson merits congratulations for bringing the viewpoints currently held in medical, psychological and sociological circles together in a single volume. One of its chief values is that it points to the need for a carefully designed long range epidemiological study of the phenomena associated with the behavior patterns we identify with schizophrenia. Sociologists interested in schizophrenia will find this book indispensable.

AUGUST B. HOLLINGSHEAD

Yale University

BOOK NOTES

The Class of 1961: Freshman Morale at M.I.T.

By LEILLA SUSSMANN. Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1960. x, 99 pp. No price indicated, paper.

The empirical assessment of changes in freshman morale from pre-college entrance to final examinations is a worthy effort indeed, but it is doubtful whether the rather crude method and analysis employed could have elicited anything other than the findings that academic achievement (grades) were the single most important factor affecting freshman morale, and that poor performance was associated with defensive over-aspiration, high expectations, and overestimation of class position. The entering students gave all the socially correct replies: desiring to work independently, preferring theoretical to applied problems, being interested in science rather than in engineering, and aspiring to be in the top half of the class.

The author also finds that good study habits, developed in high school but not in college, as well as intrinsic interest in subject matter, led to better performance and hence to higher morale. Recommendations for raising freshman morale include the de-emphasis of grades and greater equality of opportunity to attain high grades by teaching study habits, by use of an absolute rather than relative grading system, and by employing a pass-fail system of grading.

Even if one ignores the lack of information on student intelligence, and the repeated reference to correlations and inferential statistics which never appear in the book, the mono-

graph seems truly "freshman oriented." It represents the point of view of the first-year college student without taking into consideration the prerogatives and responsibilities of a higher education.—SALOMON RETTIG

The Citizen Volunteer: His Responsibility, Role, and Opportunity in Modern Society. Edited by NATHAN E. COHEN. New York: Harper & Bros., 1960. xvi, 267 pp. \$4.75.

This is a useful volume of information and inspiration, sponsored by the National Council of Jewish Women to celebrate its sixty-fifth anniversary, directed primarily to those social agency executives and others interested in volunteer work. Of the twenty contributors, only two, David Sills and Charles Lebeaux, are professional sociologists, but other sociological work on volunteers, such as that by Rose, Hyman and Wright, Wilensky and Lebeaux, and Barber, is taken into account. Most of the essays are by practitioners of the volunteer art who, while they display a good deal of experience and sociological commonsense, also express many unfounded sociological assumptions and assertions. Any one of these untested views could become the focus of valuable research for scientific sociology itself and for the art of using volunteers in American society. This book will serve a purpose beyond the one for which it is intended if it inspires some of our graduate students and colleagues to work in this field of sociological and moral importance.—BERNARD BARBER